Power Projects (UMPP) under tariff based competitive bidding route envisaged under Section 63 of the Electricity Act, 2003 through project specific shell companies. Central Electricity Authority has identified a coastal site Tadri in Uttar Kannada as one of the potential site for development of Ultra Mega Projects. The project is currently under hold in want of certain clarifications from the State Government.

Fall in rural electrification figures

668. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of States claiming 100 per cent rural electrification has fallen from 11 in 1991 to just 5 in 2005, according to the latest Central Electricity Authority data;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the national average of village electrification is down to 74 per cent of inhabited villages, from a much higher 85 per cent way back in 1991; and

(c) if so, whether the tumble in rural electrification figures is attributed to the recently revision in the criterion for declaring a village electrified?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE): (a) Yes, Sir. As reported by Central Electricity Authority (CEA), only 5 States namely Goa, Delhi, Haryana, Kerala and Punjab have achieved 100% village electrification as against earlier 11 States, namely Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Kerala, Maharashtra, Nagaland, Punjab, Sikkim and Tamil Nadu corresponding to inhabited villages as per 1991 census.

(b) Yes, Sir. National average of village electrification as on March 2006 has come down to 73.8% from the earlier 85% corresponding to inhabited villages as per 1991 census.

(c) The revision in the number of States claiming 100% rural electrification as also National average of village electrification may be attributed to:

(i) Adoption of new definition for declaring village as electrified with effect from 2004-05;

(ii) Increase in the total number of inhabited villages from 587556 as per 1991 census to 593732 as per 2001 census; and

(iii) De-electrification of already electrified villages reported by certain States due to natural calamities, theft of the materials and application of new definition.

NTPCS bids under NELP

669. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether NTPC proposes to bid under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) in order to diversify into the oil and gas sectors;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what is its existing stake in up-stream LNG both in the country and abroad?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE): (a) and (b) NTPC is exploring the possibility of bidding under New Exploration Licensing Policy-VI (NELP-VI). There are 55 blocks on offer by the Government under NELP-VI. NTPC is in the process of identifying the blocks of interest and suitable technical partner. Earlier, a consortium comprising of NTPC Ltd., Canoro Resources Ltd. and Geo Petrol International has already been allotted an oil exploration block AA-ONN-2003/2 in Arunachal Pradesh under NELP-V. NTPC has 40% stake in this consortium.

(c) At present, NTPC does not have any upstream stake in LNG either in India or abroad.

Electricity to people Below Poverty Line

670. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have launched a scheme to provide electricity to the people living Below the Poverty Line in the country.

(b) if so, the details thereof;